

THE STANDARD OF MINISTERIAL EDUCATION.

An examination of the proposal for a purely English
Course in Theology

Reprint from Queen's Quarterly, January, 1912.

By

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To which is appended a note by Professor J. Cappon on
"Modern Universities and the Training of
the Clergy."

The Jackson Press, Kingston.

The accompanying pamphlet on the "Standard of Ministerial Education," written by Professor Jordan, with a republished Note by Professor Cappon, is issued with the approval of the Faculty of Theology of Queen's University. It presents a plea for the more serious consideration of this subject before any change in regard to it is adopted by the Presbyterian Church. At present other subjects, notably Church Union, are greatly engrossing the attention of the Church. It is, therefore, all the more necessary that hasty legislation should be avoided and that a matter so vitally affecting the welfare of the Church should receive the fullest and most careful consideration.

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Queen's University,

January, 1912.

THE STANDARD OF MINISTERIAL EDUCATION.

THE whole question of the supply of students for the Christian ministry and the character of the training that they need is one that is causing anxious consideration at the present time. It may indeed be said that to those interested in the higher life of the Church this has always been regarded as a subject of central significance. The so-called "crisis" of our own day, and in this country, is due to the fact that the number of regular candidates offering themselves for this particular service seems to be smaller instead of larger and the speedy increase of population in the West, with its consequent call for new congregations, makes a serious demand which can only be met with great difficulty. This is not a question for one Church; it is pressing heavily on all the Protestant denominations. The Presbyterian Church, through its General Assembly, in 1910, appointed a committee to survey the situation and grapple with the problem. The result of its work is embodied in a report presented to the last Assembly and contained in the minutes for 1911. That report, which has been referred to the Presbyteries and College Boards covers a very wide field, as it deals with (1) Recruiting Students for the Ministry, (2) The Training of Candidates for the Ministry, (3) The Financial Problem, (4) An Assembly Board of Education. It is not proposed in this article to traverse the whole field thus mapped out; even if the writer felt himself to be competent to deal with all the questions raised, that would not be advisable. He must merely plead the fact that he has had considerable experience in the regular ministry and in the work of teaching as a justification for his temerity in touching the particular part of the subject that comes within the range of the present discussion. Such important questions as the need of "a living wage" for hard-working ministers and whether it is advisable or not to attempt, by an Assembly Board, the task of "standardizing theological curricula" must be left to Senates and Presbyteries. All that can be given now is a few reflections on the subject of the training of men for the ministry, fragmentary and imperfect when viewed in the light of the great importance of that sub-

ject. We are told that "there should be, in view of the rapid expansion of the Church's field of operations, a special, temporary emergency course, with full ordination given after a period of successful probation in the pastorate." What this course should include is set forth, as follows:

- (a) Training in the English Bible.
- (b) A working knowledge of the English Language, Grammar, Composition, Literature, etc.
- (c) History—A General Introduction to British and Universal History.
- (d) Theology—Biblical and Systematic.
- (e) Apologetics, Comparative Religion and Missions.
- (f) Preaching—the making and delivering of sermons.
- (g) Sociology.

This takes the place of the regular Arts and Theology course for men who, except in special cases, are over twenty-five years of age, and who show efficiency in the mission field at every stage of their course. These men, according to this proposal, should have "extra-mural work supervised by correspondence throughout the entire nine years' course," with "ordination" at the end of five years, and "full ordination" at the end of the nine. It is evident that if this work is seriously attempted by earnest students and competent teachers much useful information and real discipline may be acquired during this period of painful probation. When compared with the course that most of the regular students now follow, viz., four years in Arts and three in Theology, with considerable experience in the mission fields, this course looks thin and poor, and it may turn out to be worse than it appears to be unless some effective machinery for education and supervision is called into existence. Whether this is the best way of meeting the demands of the day and whether this course will attract men who might possibly take the regular course are questions that need not be raised here; they need and no doubt will receive careful discussion. No one can deny that the problem is a real one and that we owe a debt of gratitude to those who out of their wide knowledge of the Church and country contribute to its solution.

The question arises, is it necessary or expedient, after making "special" and "temporary" provision by means of such

an "emergency course," to introduce any radical changes into the regular theological course? No doubt this course also has the limitations and imperfections that cling to all human creations, and from time to time needs revision that it may respond to larger demands and new needs. Criticism from any quarter should be cordially welcomed, as we are all in danger of becoming professional in a narrow sense. However, it may be said with a fair amount of truth and justice that our theological professors, as a rule, are men who have been in close touch with the actual work of the ministry, and that after their college career begins they are not mere cloistered students. A man who does the regular work of teaching, who occasionally visits other colleges, who appeals to the public by voice and pen, unless he has had very special advantages in early life finds that it is hard work to be "a specialist" in the stricter sense. Such a man is not inclined to make a fetish of the "standard"; he knows that the standard was made by man and for men. He has, however, an intelligent reverence for the noble tradition of scholarship that his church has received from the past, and without cherishing a rigid conservatism he may naturally think that important changes should not be made with undue haste or without very careful consideration. The facts of the general situation point also in this direction, namely, the increase in quantity and quality of popular education, the effort made in most of the churches and all the professions to raise the standards and to make the requirements more severe. It is true that these general statements do not carry us far, but they are, at least, a preparation for our particular discussion.

The committee's report itself abounds in generalities which we can all accept. For example, we all believe that "the student should be carefully trained both physically and mentally," that the object of training is "practical efficiency", but there may be considerable difference of opinion as to what this means and the best method of its accomplishment. The same is true of the statement with which this section of the report begins: "It is of the first importance that the standard of education should be a high one. So far from entertaining any thought of lowering it, we desire to lift it to a higher plane alike of culture and efficiency."

This section of the report contains twelve paragraphs, and

it cannot be reviewed in detail here, but as it is headed "The Regular Theological Course," we may presume that those who take it are required to have an Arts degree or to have taken three years of a regular university course. One would like to know what kind of an Arts course was in the mind of the committee when they suggested the institution of a purely English course in Theology. In the Calendar of Queen's University, page 142, we find the following course "prescribed by the General Assembly" for those who have not taken an Arts degree:

First Year:—Latin, Greek, English, Mathematics, and Biology, or Chemistry, or Physics.

Second Year:—Latin, Greek, English, Logic, Philosophy, (Psychology), and Ancient History or Political Economy.

Third Year:—English (or a modern language), Mental and Moral Philosophy, History (Mediæval or Modern), Hebrew.

Then follows the note: "It is strongly recommended that two years of Hebrew be taken in this course." On this the remark may be allowed that while anxious to see as many men as possible come into the Exegesis class prepared to read the original text, I would not like to see any of the other subjects in the above list, literary or scientific, displaced for the sake of the additional year in Hebrew, as that work can be carried on in the first year of the theological course. Most of our students take a heavier course than this, extending over four years; the course then outlined above is, at present, regarded as the minimum Arts course for regular students. This course need not now be discussed in detail, but one cannot help wondering how an Arts course with three foreign languages, all of them supposed to be "dead", appears to the practical men who contend for a purely English course in Theology, not merely for their emergency course, but for the regular standard. If it is an optional matter with the student whether he shall make an attempt to read the words of our Lord and the Apostles in the original Greek, most people will think that there is a still stronger reason for freeing him from the bondage of the "pagan" classics. Hence we seem driven to ask the question, what kind of an Arts course is it intended to create for those who are to be encouraged or allowed to reach the regular theological standard on the basis of a purely English course? Re-

serving the discussion of this main point, I would like to say, at this stage, that whatever course in Arts a theological student takes, whether a general course or one in honours, largely built up around particular subjects, I believe that an elementary knowledge of Biology, Geology and Astronomy would be of great service, for while the study of literature and human life is his main purpose, he should have some knowledge of the framework of this great world, in which the movement of history has been worked out, and of which all theologies are an attempted explanation.

Another remark may be made here, viz., that several of the important subjects mentioned in the "Regular Theological Course"—apart, of course, from the strictly Biblical and Pastoral topics—appear as compulsory or optional, in the above short course in Arts. It seems then that if a comprehensive and valuable statement is to be made regarding ministerial education, it cannot confine itself to the three years in Theology, but must survey the whole field of operations extending over six or seven years. An enquiry into this subject ranging over the whole Dominion might show that any help that the committee can give in raising the standard would be a welcome service; it is questionable, however, whether a rigid uniformity is desirable and not rather such large variety as is consistent with the maintenance of certain central principles.

Before coming to the specific point, the writer of this brief paper craves the liberty to wander a little longer in this general region, convinced that the time and space thus occupied is not altogether lost. Is it not well to remember that by the very nature of college life much of the real "discipline" is gained outside the class-room, is not provided for in any "curriculum," and ought to be very slightly regulated by any committee outside the student body? We live in a democratic age, most of us accept democracy with genuine gratitude and are concerned with the question, not how it can be circumvented, but rather ennobled and made effective. We are seeking to train men to be citizens of a free community, and in this general background the training of "the minister" must be set. The man who solves in a measure the problem of being free, frank, and manly among his fellow-students, standing loyal to Christian principles of truth, honour, courtesy, is on the way to

some kind of usefulness. Each professor should magnify his own work; he draws strength from the thought that his small corner of the great field is essential and important, but sometimes he cannot help recognising how little any one of us can do for the student, how much the student must do for himself, and how very complex this business of "discipline" and "culture" really is, when viewed in its large relations. This remark is quite as true in regard to the subjects that are called "practical." To copy in a mechanical way the technical terms of other departments and talk of "the laboratory" and "clinics" can only partially disguise the fact that in this sphere it is very difficult to reproduce for actual experiment the real conditions of life. At this point one might easily be drawn into a discussion of the title "practical" in reference to such subjects; the invitation is strong, but as all intelligent men are quite aware that labels used for "practical" purposes have to be taken with the required qualifications, it is not necessary to see in it any arrogant exclusive claims or any desire to press unduly a quite superficial distinction. Things to be done are learned in and by the doing of them, whether it is thinking out a problem, or the performance of a visible act. Luther toiling away at the translation of a book may not at first sight seem to be in the practical line, but viewed in the light of its far-reaching consequences, we can see that his "literary" work was an important element in one of the greatest revolutions; this translation, like our own, not only influenced mightily the language of a great modern nation, it has had an effect upon political and social life that cannot be measured. If we make our division between literature and science or between practice and theory too deep, it becomes not merely superficial but actually false and mischievous.

The theological realm has no monopoly of such discussion. These questions cannot be settled, once for all, in any department. In Medicine and Engineering there are sharp debates as to the relation between theory and practice and the best method of finding in these spheres, well-balanced education. Such subjects must be discussed in relation to the actual conditions of time and place. In some countries where students take a long continuous academic course there may be great need for exalting the practical side. In this country the demands

of study and the claims of scholarship have to face a fierce struggle. Our college session is short, our students are expected, during the "vacation", to give considerable time and energy to the practical problems of ministerial life, and these expectations are brought to bear upon them early in their college career. The way in which they meet these demands is subjected to severe criticism, but on the whole they respond with real courage and learn many useful lessons through the sharp struggle. It may be questioned, then, whether it would be wise to hamper their attempts to become real students by asking that during their college session they should devote more time to the "practical religious activities." We have ventured to suggest to students that for them, in the meantime, "the higher life" may manifest itself in a strenuous endeavour to do their proper work in a reverent, conscientious spirit. To become a student is a thing that has to be learned, and as it is a commonplace that a minister should be a student all his life, surely we cannot regard the time spent in acquiring mental discipline and some insight into methods of work as, in any sense, lost. The man who has gained in his college course some knowledge of history, an intelligent view of the principles of thought and the methods of literary interpretation, and who is therefore in some effective sense a trained man, is most likely to be able to act as a teacher and inspirer of his fellow-men. The Presbyterian Church cannot, according to its present constitution, classify its young men at the beginning into preachers, professors, organisers, ecclesiastical lawyers, and social reformers; it has had to go upon the principle of giving to the rank and file of its ministers a good all-round education in arts and theology, leaving any further differentiation to the course of later events. Even this aim has never been completely realised, but results have been attained which have enabled our Church to contribute to the general ecclesiastical life something of which we have no need to be ashamed. Under the present system men have been sent out who, according to the measure of their ability, have combined with work in the pulpit varied pastoral activities, and also men who have engaged in all kinds of work, outside this sphere, educational, journalistic, legal and political. Whether the situation would be improved by revolutionising the present system to give larger room for the treatment

of such subjects as "Relief, Social Control, Treatment of Defectives, Conservation of Human Life and Health, the peculiar problems of urban and rural life," etc., is, of course, legitimate matter for free discussion. There are some of us who have a very keen sense of the present importance of such subjects, who yet think that the detailed treatment of them must be worked out by properly qualified men, and that the Christian minister, while rendering such help as comes within his power, must prize very highly the opportunity that his position gives of declaring the principles of social service and helping to create the atmosphere of Christian sympathy in which such work can best be done.

The one point remaining to be discussed is the committee's attack on Greek and Hebrew in their character as compulsory subjects in the regular course. "While it is doubtful whether we are in a position to replace Hebrew and Greek immediately as cultural disciplines, there is no doubt that they can be replaced." Apart from the fact that "cultural disciplines" is a very questionable kind of phrase, the whole statement leaves something to be desired in the way of clearness; one would like to know how it is that if Greek and Hebrew can be replaced as "cultural disciplines", it is still doubtful whether we are in a position to replace them. But to continue, "there is also no doubt that, as many students deal with them, they tragically fail to become cultural disciplines to these students. Besides, there is no contradiction between culture and efficiency. While, therefore, both Greek and Hebrew shall continue to be found in the curriculum, an optional English course, in which these subjects shall not be required, should also be instituted."

In another paragraph of the same report we are told that the committee has in its possession "a detailed plan for a curriculum in English." "To read it is to be convinced that neither the quantity nor the quality of a student's preparation for the ministry necessarily depends on his knowledge of the ancient languages." As this document is not before us we are not able, by its means, to attain quick conviction and sudden conversion. Let us note the full force of this statement; taken in connection with what has gone before it amounts to a claim that the ancient languages may be removed from the entire curriculum without lowering the standard of ministerial edu-

cation. It is of course admitted that if any are to be prepared for "scholarly investigation" this cannot be done by a purely English course, but the statement just given is applied to "the great majority." The present writer has very grave doubts as to the soundness of this position. He was, at first, surprised that such a report could, in all seriousness, be presented to the highest court of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. While, in the meantime, it tolerates Greek and Hebrew on the curriculum, that is where they are likely to remain, and not in the minds and hearts of many students, if the spirit that dominates this report is to prevail. The subject is too large for complete discussion at the close of a general article of this character, but sufficient may be said to show that hasty action with regard to this subject is undesirable. Those who desire that the influence of the Church should be exerted on behalf of the essential elements of the classic standard, are just as anxious as the framers of this report that ministers should be men who are at home in the modern world, practical and efficient in noble teaching and in efforts for the deepening of personal piety and the pursuit of social righteousness.

In order to save space the concluding summary must be compressed into a few brief paragraphs.

(1). The ideal represented by the report does not seem to be according to the best British tradition; on this side of the Atlantic the system of options has been carried to a great length; such a system may be good for those who have had a broad preliminary training, but it must be limited in its applications to a professional course. To those of us who believe that real exposition of the Bible has still a great part to play, it seems as reasonable to discourage the study of its original languages as to weaken the study of anatomy in a medical or of mathematics in a "science" course.

(2). The report goes even farther than the suggestions on the "Basis of Union"; there, where some amount of modification and compromise was to be expected, Greek is retained on all the definite courses, and where options are mentioned it is stated that these shall be arranged in consultation with the college authorities.

(3). The idea that one should eliminate, as far as possible, from the educational course all subjects that cannot be made

quickly and distinctly useful is a mischievous one. This thought is not new, for men have always been eager for rapid and easy methods of doing great things, but it should rather be regarded as a narrow commercial theory than raised to the rank of a doctrine in the Christian church. It is less tolerable now than ever in these days when a large vision of the unity of life is clearly within our reach. Some of us who at one time had the privilege of studying mathematics and the elements of certain "sciences" for which we have had no use, in the narrower sense of the word, still believe that our time was not wasted, but well spent.

(4). If one is to use such a strong word as "tragic" in connection with the limitations and failure of our educational course, we must not confine it to the study of Greek and Hebrew. There is failure in many directions, as teachers and students can testify, and the causes of it are quite varied in their character. Teaching may, in some cases, be poor, lacking in insight and stimulus, the study may be imperfect, unworthy of the name. Some students make the mistake of attempting too much in a short time, thus scattering their energies; others do not sufficiently realise the urgency of the opportunity. We cannot claim to have reached perfection in any department. But to-day, on account of the wise comprehensive labours of those who have gone before, the teaching of Hebrew, like the study of other subjects, may be more scientific, a discipline for the reason as well as the memory. And it is a discipline that is closely related to one of the main lines of a minister's training, the acquirement of the power of literary interpretation. Here he meets with an earlier mode of thinking and a different style of expression; the effort to understand this should lead to a fuller mastery of his own thought and language. If he is to be content with a very superficial acquaintance with the Great Book that lies always before him on the sacred desk, he will probably be regarded as setting for himself a lower standard than that of the other professions.

(5). It is said that it is only "a smattering" of this higher Biblical criticism that the average student can gain; but remember that the term is relative, we are all quite prepared to admit that it is only "a smattering" that we achieve after years of painful toil. But the greatness of the subject

should rather stimulate our exertions than justify our neglect. There never was a time when this smattering was more essential; without it it is difficult, if not impossible, for a student to reach an *inside* view of the critical processes that have been applied to the Bible with such far-reaching results. We may well ask, however, if a student in "the regular theological course" can be expected to gain more than a very slight "smattering" of such subjects as "Criminology, Relief, Social Control of the Child, Treatment of Defectives, etc.?" We are surely not expected to train lawyers, municipal health officers or inspectors of asylums. The minister may be expected to keep alive the humanitarian spirit that should be embodied in these varied forms, but not to furnish the expert manipulation of the appropriate machinery.

(6). We must also remember the danger of driving real Biblical scholarship outside the Church. If it seems "tragic" that many seeds die and never come to visible fruit, there is also the brighter side, that some seeds bring forth sixty or a hundredfold. As I have said before, it is a part of our system, and I am not sure that it is a disadvantage, that we cannot confine our claim for Greek and Hebrew to a few prospective specialists. Unless a considerable number of our men pursue these studies we cannot hope to keep up the succession of "scholarly investigators" and raise the general level of learning so that the minister will continue to be a mediator between the main body of intelligent Christians and the circle of special students. For this the college course may give an outline, a method, a point of view, some inspiration; then the student must go forth and face the daily conflict between the "ideal" and the "practical" interests, striving to unite these in a living spirit of service. The Bible will be studied, there need be no fear in regard to that; it will continue to attract the keenest intellects in many nations, but is the Presbyterian Church of Canada to contribute its due share to this great work? That is an important element in the discussion, and we might be content to say, no, we must leave this high task to older nations that have fewer practical problems. The reason that we cannot give this answer is found in the simple fact that life cannot in any crude way be separated into distinct compartments;

we need the leaven of this scholarship ourselves, to give the proper tone and character to our practical work.

(7). Finally, it is very doubtful whether a weakened course will attract strong men; some outsiders already have the idea that the theological course is "a soft course," and if its severest disciplines are made optional this suspicion may find real confirmation. Many interesting questions concerning this great subject have had to be passed over, or glanced at in the most cursory fashion. Some may think that until we have a fuller statement as to the proposed option we cannot say whether the standard will be raised or lowered. In the realm of solid things or even of mechanical forces that can be accurately measured, equivalents may be fixed with ease and precision. But here the question is more subtle and difficult. An academic equivalent, for example, for two years of Hebrew might be to offer two years of German; there would be some similarity in the character and amount of the discipline. Academic standards, it may be said, are artificial and pedantic, and of course it may be admitted that it is possible to apply them in a too narrow fashion. The present writer would not have spent time and energy on this subject if it had not appeared to him to be of unusual importance. He accepts the statement of this committee that they desire to raise the standard of ministerial education, but he is driven to the conclusion that the effect of their report considered as to its special contribution would be to lower it. "Efficiency" is the watchword of our time, and if the word is interpreted with sufficient breadth it may suggest something that we all desire. It is not a thing completely acquired at the end of a college course, but a quality that the conscientious man is seeking all through his life. In this sphere it is difficult to define, and we would like to retain in the definition not simply the thought of a competent organiser of the external side of ecclesiastical affairs, but of one who helps to enlarge and deepen the spiritual content of what we call Christianity by showing how God has wrought His wonders through the growing life of humanity, and how the eternal message is making its claims for a richer interpretation and a more living application to the needs of our personal and social life.

W. G. JORD N.

MODERN UNIVERSITIES AND THE TRAINING OF THE CLERGY.*

The *Montreal Star* in an editorial the other day drew the attention of its readers to some features in the case of an American clergyman who at the age of thirty-two threw up his position and left the ministry. It was no question of scandal, or disagreement between the pastor and his congregation, nor even of his being summoned to labour in a more opulent portion of the vineyard. His position from his own account seems to have been satisfactory in every material respect. But from the beginning of his college career he seems to have been disagreeably impressed by a certain sense of inferiority in prestige and reality, attaching to his profession. He was of those who are convinced they have a "call" for the ministerial profession, yet he felt obliged to admit the ministry did not attract strong men. "At college," he says, "the strong men preferred to study law or medicine, the weak ones theology." The suspicion that this was the case he found confirmed in the Divinity School.

It is easy enough to understand that this condition of things may be reaching a painful stage in the United States. The proportion of weaker brethren in the profession is probably no greater than it ever was; but the church is no longer the power which it was in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and even in the early half of the nineteenth century, when theological questions excited and to some extent determined the destinies of nations, when the keenest intellects went into the theological arena as one of the great battlegrounds of the world, and doctors of the church were most conspicuous amongst the leaders of thought and national life. Other avenues now are equally open to the strong and ambitious and intellectual, and perhaps even more tempting. This is particularly the case in the United States where worth is so commonly measured by a material gauge and a man's influence and prestige may be estimated by the display he can make with his money. It is not quite so bad in some old countries like Eng-

* I have taken the liberty of reproducing this statement from "Current Events," *Queen's Quarterly*, April, 1904, as while not concerned with the particular problem of our curriculum, it deals, in a broad fashion, with the general situation. W. G. J.

land where tradition, social usage and an inherited reverence for the church still make the clergyman a power in his district. But even in Scotland, where are the successors of Norman Macleod, Chalmers, Guthrie, Candlish? There are men of more learning now, men whose names are well known to the scholar and the student of divinity, but their influence on the nation, on the temper, the education and political life of their countrymen is, comparatively speaking, nothing. The editor of a great daily has far more power; the prestige of a popular M.P., or of the Pittsburg millionaire with his worship of material magnitudes, is much greater. It is not surprising then if in the United States, where the local political boss and the banker and the railway magnate are the ruling figures, a young, active-minded, open-eyed student of the church should seriously question himself whether he has chosen a profession which is of much weight in this country and likely to satisfy his natural ambitions. For that of course is the meaning of his complaint that the strong men do not seek the church as a profession.

The complaint is characteristically American in its courage, its candour and its inability to conceive of any ideal of life which does not take the world's eye or embody itself directly in some public, practical form of organization. For one thing, it is rather amusing to see that this modern clergyman is so far away from the historical basis of Christianity that he is quite naïvely oblivious of the warning of St. Paul, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble." . . . No doubt Paul could not readily conceive the condition of Christianity once it had become the religion of emperors and a great feudal aristocracy, still less when it has become the "gospel-mill" of our materialized democracies and a profession to be coolly compared in prospects and attractiveness with law and medicine. Still I cannot help thinking that a good exegesis of Corinthians i, 26, had it been obtainable in his university, would have helped him over his difficulties.

These preliminary discouragements did not, however, deter him from completing his course and entering upon his profession. Indeed it was only after he did so that his real doubts about the usefulness of his vocation arose. The *Star* reports his confession thus:

When he was quite a youth he wanted to do good to men and felt sure that he knew how; to-day he desires far more strongly to do good, but his old confidence that he knew how has deserted him. In this respect he declares that he is not alone. "It is simply a fact that among the Protestant clergy there is an ever-increasing obscurity of conception regarding the very task they have before them." For a while the Evangelistic method seemed to be the key to the greatest usefulness; then great missionary enterprises came very much to the front; to-day sociology, with all that it involves in the way of social betterment, mainly occupies the field. So then he asks himself: "Will the Church continue to exist at all?" Or will it have its euthanasia in social work? He even asks: "Should the Church persist? Is it not possible that we have come to the point where it is seriously to be doubted whether the Church, with its pulpit, is the best medium of expression for religious or any other kind of opinion?" The press, the public platform and a dozen other agencies have so evidenced their scope that they have all, in the opinion of the writer, become dangerous competitors."

I have had some experience of clerical students in Canadian, Scottish and English universities, and of course I have seen cases like that of this American clergyman, though generally of a less acute character. The superior frankness of the American, however, his acute realistic analysis of his situation, and his statement that the problem is becoming a common one in the States, gives his publication a certain importance. He tells us that there were forty young men in the class in which he graduated six years ago. Of these only thirty actually entered the ministry, and out of the thirty ten have already dropped out. "Two are insurance agents, one is a salesman, one is farming, one is conducting a settlement house, and the tenth — the writer himself — does not know what he is going to do."

The scruples of this young man do not seem to have had any concern with dogma. The chief objection, curiously enough, which he makes to his profession, seems to be its inferiority, as he thinks, in the higher forms of philanthropic and intellectual work, its inferiority "as a medium of expression for opinion" compared with the press, the platform, politics, literature and other agencies of the kind, in short, its inferiority as an intellectual influence on the national life. There is no doubt something peculiarly American about this case, but it is something which will soon be making itself felt in Canada and Britain also. The key to the situation lies in two of the sentences quoted above. One expresses the writer's dissatisfaction with the common Evangelistic method as a life work, the other reveals the fact that the University and the Divinity Hall had not taught him any other ideal which placed

him in real and vital relation to his time. "It is simply a fact," he says with characteristic American courage, "that among the Protestant clergy there is an ever-increasing obscurity of conception regarding the very task they have before them."

The problem indicated here is likely to grow for various reasons. In particular the trend of modern education in our great universities, once the seminaries of the church, is becoming positively unfavourable for the development of the divinity student. In many of them the predominance of a poor utilitarian, materialistic ideal of education is destroying the atmosphere in which divinity or even the higher forms of literature and philosophy can be effectively taught. It is not enough, as some people seem to think, to have chairs of Greek and philosophy and art or architecture as a fine art, with efficient professors in them, to secure that these subjects shall be effectively taught and enter as really vital elements into the life of the students and the nation. They will not become vital or effective elements, unless the general scheme of university studies supports and encourages them, unless the atmosphere of the university is such that their importance is understood and appreciated. The value which such studies have in orienting the mind of the student, in helping him to understand the relation of the present to the past, to study reverently the long history of man's spiritual progress and to comprehend its connection with the problems of to-day is often ill understood, and indeed may be quite lost sight of in our great modern universities. Courses which seem to the young student more modern and practical, constitutional history, economics, occupy him prematurely with complex, concrete materials, while the instrumental and general studies, languages, literature and philosophy, are neglected or studied mainly in technical, formal or quasi-scientific aspects of philology, origins, epigraphy, hardly at all in their relation to art and life. Of course all this is but the reflection in university life of the excessive immersion of this age in practical and commercial interests. There has been a corresponding decay of the ideal and spiritual elements in education.

I think there is likely to be a strong reaction against this trend in education, or at any rate what is excessive in it. The American universities which have been leading merrily in this

direction for the last twenty-five years are now beginning to find that their educational system has serious defects and yields poor general results. Idealism is to be the word in education again. The *Providence Journal* comments on the recent revolt of the idealist school at Columbia University in the following terms: "The real problem of modern education should be not to supplant these ideals and aspirations (of the great mediæval universities) but to supplement them with the scientific method of modern times. With art and literature relegated to the background, university training, whatever else it may be, is not liberal education." It is not, however, so easy as it looks to restore the lost element. The Americans are turning round and round in their energetic attempts to accomplish it. One scheme at present seems to be the establishment of a Fine Arts Faculty, with music, architecture, sculpture, painting, and *belles-lettres*. (Bless the old word! I had thought it was practically defunct). That is the system proposed by Professors Macdowell, Woodberry and the other recalcitrant members of Columbia's staff, who have resigned because of President Butler's opposition to their scheme. I cannot say that I would expect much from this separate and purely aesthetic Faculty. Of course you can establish a practical school of art with a certain sure amount of profit anywhere, just as you might any other practical school; but you could not bring that into the general system of education any more than you could a school of practical engineering. Some students might take advantage of it, but its general influence on education would be small. Besides, the "idealism" of an art school which would not be strongly attached to the main line of general education, that is, to a literary and philosophical interpretation of life, would soon become a formal aestheticism, perhaps a wearisome affectation, a jargon of the school. I have as little faith in it, taken by itself, as I have in President Butler's opposite ideal of a two years' course for graduates, mainly on practical lines. It is curious to see how these two, a pure aestheticism and a materialistic utilitarianism, rise up together either as allies or, as at Columbia University, as foes.

Is it any wonder then that the Divinity student in our great modern universities on this continent is beginning to lose his bearings and to be incapable of understanding his re-

lation to St. Paul's teaching on the one side and to modern problems of life on the other? What between Pharisaism, and the open-eyed realism natural to the American, and the absence of a true idealism in his educational system, the divinity student evidently has difficulty in understanding where he is. What is the American's difficulty to-day will be ours to-morrow. How are we to meet it?

We shall not, I think, meet it effectively by falling back on the Theological College or Seminary to give what the university has failed to give or undo what it has done. That has something of the same defect as a separate Fine Arts Division would have, considered as a general education. The Theological College is a specific and necessary professional training, but it takes the student too much out of the general current of life to give him a good general education, even if it had a full course in arts. It could make priests, but not the modern clergymen we need. The Theological College will naturally treat everything in subordination to doctrine and church requirements. But that is not the best equipment for the modern Protestant clergyman who is to mingle freely with the world of men and take a part in the movements of his time. He needs a perfectly free education in modern thought. But in order that this may be capable of being combined with religious ideals this must itself contain in a vital and organic way the ideal or religious element, not in a dogmatic but in a free form. The divinity student is the better of free contact with arts men and science men, students of law and students of philosophy. He needs to absorb and reconcile the apparently antagonistic elements in their studies, not to evade or put them aside. This is of more value to him than all the six specific courses in the history of Lutheran theology, Calvinistic theology, Catholic theology, etc., which are taught in the Oberlin Theological College. Without the right kind of university training he goes out into the world imperfectly prepared for his work. In fact, as the case of the American clergyman shows, he does not clearly see what his work is. He is not trained to put spiritual or religious truths in a modern way, or understand their modern form. If he is intellectually ambitious and unable to content himself with the simplest forms of evangelistic work, he feels that he is belated and stands helplessly outside of the

great intellectual currents in the life of his time and of its general movement. That is the case of the American "Quitter," as the *Star* calls him, and though I do not like the word I cannot find a better.

But it is not only the divinity student who suffers from the trend of education and the atmosphere at our great modern universities. The medical student, the law student, the science student, and even the teacher, are losing something from the want of a true idealistic element in our modern education. We cut down the general educational elements in their course to the lowest point. Galen's Hippocratic ideal of a moral and philosophical education for the physician would seem a piece of classical antiquarianism to many, even though its fancies about astronomy were left out. Our lawyers hardly look beyond constitutional history and perhaps some economics for their general equipment. Our practical science men take a junior class in English as their *quantum sufficit* of general education, and even that must be put in some very practical form, or they would think it as useless as reading Homer or *Paradise Lost*. The effect which this gradual decay of the ideal element in our modern educational system will have is only beginning to be apparent in a few disagreeable phenomena. I notice some of the most capable men Queen's has sent into the teaching profession left it in a few years. And I perceive a certain discontent amongst many others. Is this not on the whole due to a feeling on their part that the ideal element in their work has become a travesty under modern utilitarian conditions and conditions of life? A teacher's work without such an element is the sorriest slavery. I cannot help thinking that an old Scotch dominie of forty years ago teaching his classical "Selections" and reading Addison and Cowper to his pupils was a prouder and happier man than his modern successor.

Mr. S. H. Blake, I see, has been recently urging on us the necessity of "higher ideals" in public and professional life. How are they to be got while the ideal element in our education is being gradually crushed out both in the lower and the higher parts of our system? The common school system is supposed to be specially organized to meet the educational needs of the working man. Well, it was only the other day that a labour leader, John Turner, told the Central Federated Union that the

working men "have no fatherland. They do not trust their governments, but they trust themselves." John Mitchell speaks even more gloomily. There is a deep-seated evil here which utilitarian standards of education will not cure.

I have occasionally been much interested by complimentary theories, from the outside, accounting for the success which has attended Queen's University considering the obvious disadvantages of poverty, remoteness from a great commercial or political centre, etc., with which the university has had to contend. Various elements have combined to make that success, amongst others, energy in administration, hard work on the part of the professors such as contributes to the success of any university; but I think the most powerful general element in the whole has been the better preservation of the ideal element in education, the greater recognition and more effective place given to it than in some greater or larger universities. That has been Queen's special type of education in the past. Our divinity students have never felt that they were overborne by an alien or materialistic atmosphere, nor our classical or philosophical students either. They have the same confidence in the value of their studies as an equipment for life as the specialists in science or practical subjects have. In this respect the church in Canada, and I do not mean only the Presbyterian church, owes more to Queen's than perhaps it is aware of. That is a characteristic of its work still amidst all its modern and scientific developments. It is that "old-time university" part of it which Chancellor Burwash lately referred to with something of a sneer, quite unconscious apparently of how much it does to meet not only the needs of the church but one of the great problems in modern education.

J. CAPPON.

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